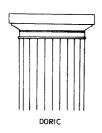
SHEPHERD OF TENDER YOUTH

If we were to trace some of our most important ideas about medicine, geometry and democracy and other areas of education back to their beginnings, we would have to go back in time to Ancient Greece.



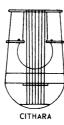




Although the Parthenon was one of the most beautifully designed buildings in the world, with its tall Doric columns built of creamy white marble, citizens of Greece lived in simple brick houses with one door and no windows. Instead of being concerned with elaborate furnishing and material possessions, the Greeks spent most of their time being a part of all that went on in that world. Each citizen was expected to keep up with the latest news, to take part in discussions and elections, to keep physically fit, and to take part in creating music and poetry.

Even simplicity in clothing - and neatness - were the way of life, with a length of folded white wool cloth pinned at the shoulders.

Shepherd of Tender Youth is a hymn whose simple and beautiful words are thought to have come from a poem written by a Grecian, Clement of Alexandria, in 220 A.D., at a time when Greece was no longer the most powerful civilization in the world. It is the oldest hymn appearing in most of the denominational hymnals of our present day. Most of the Christian poetry of Greece was sung without instrumental accompaniment except for those instruments David had used in the Old Testament:





The early Greek musical scale was based on four notes, but we use a tune by Edward Bunnett to accompany Henry Dexter's translation of Clement's poem. If you have other hymnals, discover what those hymnals use for this early hymn.

Translations are never easy, and there are often words which have no "equivalents" in our language. You may need to look up the meanings of words like: "devious," "hither," "subduing," "abase," "perennial."

How quickly can you discover the rhythmic pattern which keeps recurring in the tune? Notice also the movement of the melodic intervals, comparing the 1st and 7th measures, the 3rd and 9th measures, and the 11th and 12th measures which end with an interval drop of a sixth. Do these repeated patterns make a tune easier or more difficult to learn?

We owe our appreciation to the early Greeks for many gifts which were originated by them at a time when persons believed it was their responsibility to cooperate with one another in building the kind of world that would be better for them all!

That isn't a bad idea for us, is it?